AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application with the listing of claims as follows:

<u>Listing of Claims</u>

1.-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Withdrawn) A method comprising:

identifying an option limit order, said option limit order including information identifying a customer, information identifying a desired option, and information that indicates a limit price for said option limit order;

identifying at least one of a trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction relevant to said option limit order; and

generating an alert substantially in real time on the basis of the identified at least one of a trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 15, further comprising:

classifying the alert as one of active and inactive.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein the alert is classified as inactive because a corresponding trade-through transaction or trade-at transaction occurred within a predetermined period after an order time of the option limit order.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein the alert is classified as inactive because the option limit order is filled within a predetermined period after occurrence of a corresponding trade-through transaction or trade-at transaction.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein the alert is classified as inactive because a corresponding trade-through transaction or trade-at transaction occurred on a non-leading exchange.

20.-27. (Cancelled)

28. (Withdrawn) A method comprising:

      determining a set of option limit orders that are in effect during a trading day, each of said option limit orders including information identifying a respective desired option, and information that indicates a respective limit price for said option limit order;

      receiving options trading information indicative of options trading activity on a plurality of exchanges during the trading day; and

      after closing of the trading day, generating at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data for the determined set of option limit orders based on the received options trading information.

29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 28, further comprising:

      purging cancelled transaction data from the received trading information before the generating of the at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data.

30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 28, wherein the determining the set of option limit orders includes carrying over open limit orders from a previous trading day.

31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 28, wherein all of the options trading information for the trading day is received after closing of the trading day.

32. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for generating quality data associated with an option limit order, comprising:

    a processor; and

    a storage device in communication with said processor and storing instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to

        identify an option limit order, said option limit order including information identifying a customer, information identifying a desired option, and information that indicates a limit price for said option limit order;

        receive a substantially real time feed of option market data; and

        use the option market data in real time to identify at least one of a trade-through transaction relevant to said option limit order and a trade-at transaction relevant to said option limit order.

33. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of claim 32, wherein said storage device further stores instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to forward said option limit order to a selected one of a plurality of option exchanges to execute said option limit order, said forwarding based at least in part on one of said information identifying said customer and said desired option.

34. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for generating quality data associated with an option limit order, comprising:

    a processor; and

    a storage device in communication with said processor and storing instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to

identify an option limit order, said option limit order including information identifying a customer, information identifying a desired option, and information that indicates a limit price for said option limit order;

identify at least one of a trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction relevant to said option limit order; and

generate an alert substantially in real time on the basis of the identified at least one of a trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction.

35. (Canceled).

36. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for generating quality data associated with a plurality of option limit orders, comprising:

a processor; and

a storage device in communication with said processor and storing instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to

determine a set of option limit orders that are in effect during a trading day, each of said option limit orders including information identifying a respective desired option, and information that indicates a respective limit price for said option limit order;

receive options trading information indicative of options trading activity on a plurality of exchanges during the trading day; and

generate, after closing of the trading day, at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data for the determined set of option limit orders based on the received options trading information.

37. (Withdrawn) A limit order protection system, comprising:

a communication device for receiving an option limit order, said option limit order including information identifying a customer, information identifying an option, and information that indicates a limit price for said option limit order;

means for receiving a substantially real time feed of option market data; and

means for using the option market data in real time to identify at least one of a trade- through transaction relevant to said option limit order and a trade-at transaction relevant to said option limit order.

38. (Withdrawn) A limit order protection system, comprising:

a communication device for receiving an option limit order, said option limit order including information identifying a customer, information identifying an option, and information that indicates a limit price for said option limit order;

means for identifying at least one of a trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction relevant to said option limit order; and

means for generating an alert substantially in real time on the basis of the identified at least one of a trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction.

39. (Canceled).

40. (Withdrawn) A limit order protection system, comprising:

means for determining a set of option limit orders that are in effect during a trading day, each of said option limit orders including information identifying a respective desired option, and information that indicates a respective limit price for said option limit order;

means for receiving options trading information indicative of options trading activity on a plurality of exchanges during the trading day; and

means for generating, after closing of the trading day, at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data for the determined set of option limit orders based on the received options trading information.

41. (New) A processor-implemented method for monitoring and evaluating an option limit order, comprising:

receiving an option limit order, the option limit order including information identifying a customer, a desired option, and indicating a limit price for the option limit order;

receiving a real-time feed of option market data;

utilizing the received option market data to identify at least one of trade-through transaction relevant to the option limit order and a trade-at transaction relevant to the option limit order, wherein the at least one of a trade-through and a trade-at transaction occurs at a better price than the limit price for the option limit order; and

generating via a processor an alert, the alert including identity of the identified at least one of trade-through transaction relevant to the option limit order and trade-at transaction relevant to the option limit.

42. (New) The method of claim 41, further comprising:

using the identified at least one of a trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction to tabulate at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data for a plurality of option limit orders;

tabulating fulfillment data for the plurality of option limit orders placed by the customer; and

comparing the tabulated fulfillment data to the tabulated at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data.

43. (New) The method of claim 42, wherein comparing the tabulated fulfillment data to the tabulated at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data further comprises:

calculating a first number, the first number comprising a total number of contracts from the tabulated fulfillment data;

calculating a second number, the second number comprising a total number of contracts from the tabulated at least one of trade-through and trade-at data; and

dividing the first number by the second number to generate a performance measure.

44. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein said information identifying a desired option further includes: a type of said order, a security underlyer, an option expiration date, and a size of said order.

45. (New) The method of claim 41, further comprising:

disregarding the identified at least one of trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction in response to a market condition in effect at a time of the identified at least one of a trade-through transaction and a trade-at transaction.

46. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the at least one of a trade-through and a trade-at transaction occurs at a second exchange different from a first exchange to which the option limit order was forwarded.

47. (New) The method of claim 41, further comprising time stamping the received option limit order.

48. (New) The method of claim 41, further comprising utilizing the real time feed of option market data and the alert information to generate an analysis report.

49. (New) A processor-implemented method comprising:

receiving a plurality of option limit orders, each of said option limit orders including information identifying a respective desired option that indicates a respective limit price for said option limit order;

tabulating at least one of a trade-through data and a trade-at data for the plurality of option limit orders;

tabulating fulfillment data for the plurality of option limit orders; and

comparing via a processor the tabulated fulfillment data to the tabulated at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data to generate a performance measurement, wherein the comparing includes dividing the total number of contracts in the tabulated fulfillment data by the total number of contracts in the tabulated at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data.

50. (New) The method of claim 49, wherein the tabulating at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data includes purging cancelled transactions.

51. (New) The method of claim 49, wherein the at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data corresponds only to transactions occurring on a leading exchange.

52. (New) The method of claim 49, wherein the tabulating at least one of trade-through and trade-at data includes carrying over open option limit orders from a previous trading day.

53. (New) The method of claim 49, wherein the tabulating at least one of trade-through data and trade at data includes tabulating at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data that pertains to a single customer.

54. (New) The method of claim 49, wherein the tabulating at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data includes tabulating at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data that pertains to option limit orders routed to a single exchange.

55. (New) The method of claim 49, wherein the tabulating at least one of trade-through data and trade-at data and the tabulating fulfillment data are performed with respect to each trading day.

56. (New) The method of claim 49, further comprising:

      utilizing the tabulated data to monitor the plurality of option limit orders; and

      facilitating corrective action on the plurality of option limit orders.

57. (New) An apparatus for monitoring and evaluating an option limit order, comprising:

a memory;

a processor disposed in communication with said memory, and configured to issue a plurality of processing instructions stored in the memory, wherein the processor issues instructions to:

receive an option limit order, the option limit order including information identifying a customer, a desired option, and indicating a limit price for the option limit order;

receive a real-time feed of option market data;

utilize the received option market data to identify at least one of trade-through transaction relevant to the option limit order associated with the order identifier and a trade-at transaction relevant to the option limit order associated with the order identifier, wherein the at least one of a trade-through and a trade-at transaction occurs at a better price than the limit price for the option limit order; and

generate an alert, the alert including identity of the identified at least one of trade-through transaction relevant to the option limit order and trade-at transaction relevant to the option limit.